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## ABSTRACT

This book examines the history and purpose of outdoor play areas. Chapter 1 of the book discusses the importance of play in children's lives and the role of playgrounds in the play process. The historical development and evolution of playgrounds is recounted in chapter 2, while chapter 3 reviews research on playgrounds, including research concerning gender differences, playground equipment, preschoolers' motor activities, exceptional children's playground behaviors, aggression, and parents' and teachers' attitudes about play. Chapter 4 is an international survey of innovative playgrounds. Chapter 5 considers issues relevant to playground use by exceptional children, including mentally retarded children, emotionally disturbed children, and visually and hearing impaired children. Chapter 6 reviews research on and offers suggestions concerning playground construction and safety, while ways in which playgrounds can be used as part of nonformal and formal education are outlined in chapter 7. Chapter 8 explores the potential of playgrounds to improve the impact of education on the development of children and to extend the experience of inner-city children. The book is illustrated with many photographs, including historical photographs, of playgrounds and children. Two appendixes provide a description of the International Association for the Child's Right to Play (IPA) and the IPA's Declaration of the Child's Right to Play. (BC)

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